

Days of '49 Being Outdone by African Diamond Rush

Adventurers Pouring Into the Desert North of Kimberley, Lured by Precious Gems

THE colorful scenes of the old Kimberley days are being reenacted in South Africa. Over the trails men, and even women, with prospector's kits on their backs, are passing toward what they believe to be a new Golconda, and soon, it is predicted, there is to be a "rush" such as has never been witnessed before. The greasy red shakos of natives following in the footsteps of their stolid Boer masters are again seen on the hills. The full plumage of Zulu veterans, resplendent in waving feathers and gleaming earrings, is again a familiar sight on the roads, and once more, as in the old days, there is a mighty hubbub and stir from the Cape to Zambesi and from Mozambique to the Congo.

The discovery of a new diamond field, not far from the great Kimberley pits themselves, is the cause of the excitement. In New York the reports of the richness of the field have been received with caution, the experts waiting to "be shown" before passing judgment, but on the Dark Continent, it would appear, there is no question.

As if springing from the earth, a new generation of unique characters such as were familiar enough fifty years ago when the first rush took place, but which were thought to have disappeared forever, has been quickened into life at the call of adventure.

Already on the Move

Although the field is not to be declared open for digging until March 20 next, the brood of hardy souls already has begun throwing up jobs in all parts of Africa, Asia and Europe so as to be on hand for the stampede.

For the first time in such expe-

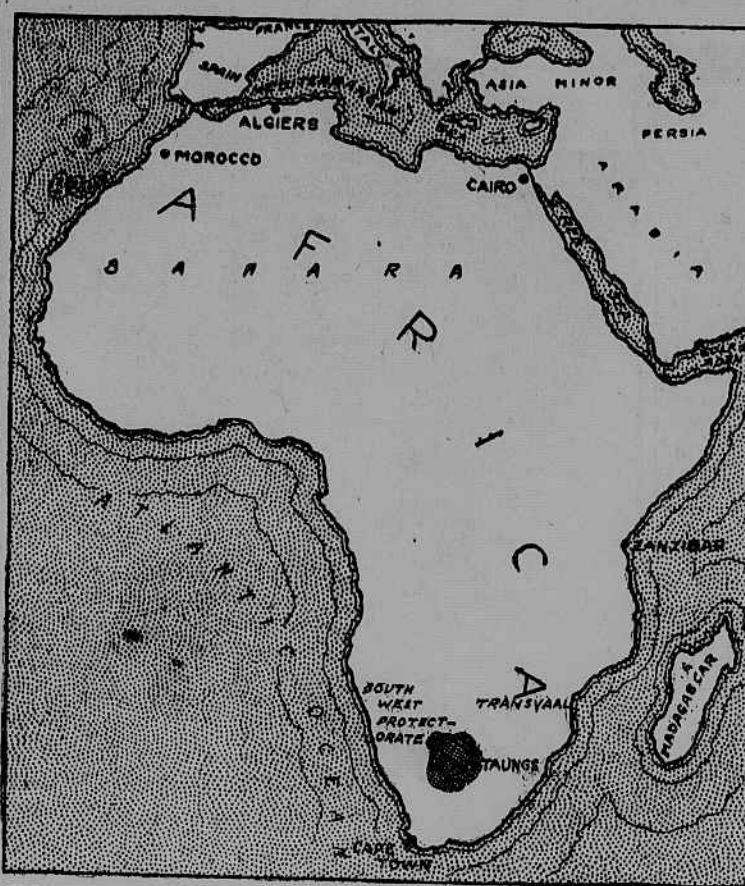
first time rumors of new finds have been heard, and in the past the expectations were not always realized. But on the other hand, New York is the first diamond buying city in the United States, if not the world, and it is recognized that anything that affects the market is bound to have an important influence here. So, among the women at least, who are the chief beneficiaries of the millions spent annually for these precious gems, close attention is being paid to the developments in the "tip" of the Dark Continent.

But so far little that is authoritative has come across the waters as to the character of the country where the diamonds are said to have been found. Such information as is to be had places it either at the edge of, or within, the Kalahari desert, a "waterless, treeless and gameless waste," near Taung, in Bechuanaland, about 100 miles north of Kimberley. On one side, to the East, is the Transvaal Colony, and on the other is what was German South Africa before the war, but which is now the Southwest Protectorate.

An Evil Name

Persons who have been there give it an evil reputation. It is, it would appear from their reports, a region of great hardships and sudden dangers. Devoid of vegetation, it affords few places of shelter for the traveler. In the rainy seasons it is subject to sudden storms of almost unbelievable fury and in the dry periods to endless stretches of ter-

FROM the four corners of the earth men in quest of sudden wealth are hurrying to the new diamond fields of South Africa. They lie in a "waterless, treeless, gameless waste"



THE SHADED spot in South Africa shows the location of the newly discovered diamond fields to which thousands are flocking

the outside. Inquiry of the farmer brought the careless reply that it was "only a bright pebble that had got mixed with the cement," but the overseer was not satisfied, and digging the object free sent it to an expert in jewels for examination. The "pebble" proved to be a diamond of large size and was sold by the overseer to a Dutch diamond firm for several thousand dollars.

Another story of the way the first find was made was that an observer, while visiting a farm adjoining Bultfontein, noticed some children playing

to be found in the rough wire meshing of the screens, the Boers refused to become greatly excited, leaving most of the work to the natives, who belonged to no unions and could be hired for very small wages.

Some of this indifference vanished, however, when a still more remarkable discovery was made in September, 1870, on the farm of Adrian J. Van Wyk at Dutoitsfontein. It is here that the famous Dutoitspan mine is located. Prospectors entering upon the tract found diamonds near the surface of the ground all about the house, many having long been carelessly kicked about under the heels of the farmers, who did not dream they had any value.

As the sharp-eyed diamond seekers continued to swarm in upon the land many stones were found under a

had been exhausted, that the swarm of adventurers thought of going further down.

This was notably true in the case of the second find on the farm which produced Dutoitspan. This ground had been gone over repeatedly to a depth of perhaps two feet and had been abandoned as exhausted before any one thought to see if anything else lay underneath.

One finally came along who possessed the proper degree of inquisitiveness, with the result that his pick sank into a substratum of soft limestone which could be crushed with a blow of the shovel, but which contained more wealth than had been found on the surface.

Diamonds, But No Water

Meantime diamonds had also been found on the De Beers farm at Vooruitzicht, two miles from Dutoitspan, and two months later another mine was uncovered on the same tract. A kopje, or hill, on this tract had been twice searched by prospectors without success and it was about to be given up when its value became known through an accident.

A well was sunk on the property, but no water was found. Finally, when the shaft had reached a depth of seventy-six feet, a diamond weighing eighty-seven carats was brought to the surface and the search for water quickly gave way to one which promised more wealth. The stream of incoming adventurers soon began to include arrivals from Australia, India and China, and these were followed by ardent spirits from California, Canada and Eastern Atlantic states. After them came men from other remote parts, until every region of the civilized world was represented.

The undeveloped gold fields of California had witnessed wonderful

of the present rush, the procession was marked by its unique character and by the different types of adventurers who took part in it. Every sailing ship and steamer touching at South African ports brought its quota of fortune hunters. Some had good outfits and supplies, being fairly well provided with money, but others had barely been able to scrape together the price of passage. Seamen deserted their ships to get to the diamond fields, just as others of their calling had done in the gold craze in California. They swarmed over the mountain terraces, scrambled up steep ravines, swam rivers, and endured countless hardships to get to the diamond fields.

As one writer put it, "Asia, Africa, Europe and America boiled over into a hodge-podge of humanity which splashed upon the diamond-studded heart of South Africa."

Rhodes Became Overlord

Many of those incidents are being recalled now when another rush is being organized. Shoveling under a burning sun is no easy task, but the prospectors endured it willingly. Somewhere in those wastes might be another Kohinoor or a Great Mogul and one man's chances of a lucky find were as good as any other's. So they delved and sweated and endured, exposing themselves alike to the whip of the African storms, the blast of the hot wind and swirling clouds of cutting, blinding sand in the hope of acquiring sudden riches. Finally, of course, the "moving

diamonds are to be placed on the market, but which decides what percentage of the whole is to be provided by each mine. Thus, of the entire output, it was recently decided by this syndicate, 51 per cent is to come from the De Beers mines, 18 per cent from the Premier mine, 10 per cent from Jagersfontein and 21 per cent from the Southwest Protectorate.

Prices Won't Fall

These percentages were established by the selling agency so as to control the market and, of course, prices, and it remains to be seen what effect, if any, the new field will have on the combination. Joachim Van Wessel, member of the big John Street diamond cutting firm, does not believe it will have any, as might be supposed, because, in the

"It is true the price of diamonds has increased greatly in recent years. For example, when our firm established a branch in New York twenty-five years ago the stones sold at from \$35 to \$100 a carat. It cost about \$18 a carat to cut them. Now the cost of cutting is \$45 a carat, but there is not so much profit as might be supposed, because, in the

first place, a carat and a half is wasted in producing each carat.

"I say I hope the new field is all that is predicted because I'd like to see the supply replenished. In recent years we have, so to speak, been constantly taking out of the bag without any means of restoring the contents. From what was German South Africa come the smaller stones and virtually the only source for the larger kind is the old field in South Africa.

"The De Beers syndicate will protect the dealers against sudden losses by regulating the supply and you may be sure that the new field will be included in the combination if it becomes desirable or necessary to include it."

asserting that even if the field proves as rich as predicted it will become a part of the De Beers syndicate.

"The subject is, of course, of

The World's Best Fishing

IT IS like reading again of the wonders that lurk beneath the waves in Blasco Ibañez's "Mare Nostrum" to spend an hour talking with sun-tanned, hard-fisted, clear-eyed Robert Cushman Murphy, thirty-three years old, curator for the Department of Natural Science of the Brooklyn Museum and explorer of note, who has just returned from a six months' adventure and scientific expedition for the museum, making investigations in the mysterious Humboldt Current along 800 miles of the Peruvian coast, as well as fifteen groups of the Guano Islands.

Going back into this young man's record, one finds that the trip which he has just made into these little visited waters is not the only one of his career. As long as six years ago, when he was only twenty-seven years old, he explored different parts of the Antarctic, going as far as the Weddell Sea, and making surveys in oceanic zoology in different parts of the world.

But in his latest sojourn he has found, he declares, the richest field for research, and he says that in the cold waters of the Humboldt Current, off the western coast of South America, there is a greater abundance of animal, fish and plant life than in any other water area in the world. He has brought back to New York fifteen large cases and bags and boxes filled with skins and skeletons and drawings, among which he expects to find, after a careful inspection and comparison, very many species of fish and bird and plant that heretofore never have been known to exist.

"The water of the Humboldt Current," he said, "is uniformly cold for 1,800 miles along the coast, so that the temperature at the north end of Peru near the equator is just as low as it is in central Chile. The current is the cause for this. In cold water there is always an abundance of fish. So in this case there is an astonishing abundance of fish and other forms of life."

He said that throughout that vast coast line there was not one organized fishery. And fish are so abundant beneath the surface that they actually "tumble over one another," he said.

You may have thought when you saw a flock of fifty or a hundred birds flying about together on one of your vacations in the country that you were beholding something unusual. Not at all! Listen to Mr. Murphy tell his bird story:

"One day I saw and photographed 1,000,000 birds of the same species in a single flock in the Guano Islands. It was difficult to see the edge of them, and I couldn't have walked among them without crushing them. They fly over the waters of the South Pacific, particularly off Peru, until they actually darken the skies."

Mr. Murphy lauded the Peruvian government for its care and protection of its industrially important birds, and said the President of the country himself gave him much assistance, lending him steam trawlers and launches with which to make his way over the ocean off Peru. He was accompanied only by a Peruvian assistant and chemist, and carried food enough to last a year.

"Did you encounter many storms at sea?" he was asked.

"Not one," was his reply. "The waters off Peru are the quietest of any place in the world because of the steady southerly winds."

scenes in the memorable invasion of '49, but none that equaled those now seen in South Africa.

The lure of riches in the heart of traditional Ophir, where river banks were reported to be fairly lined with priceless gems, where children played with diamonds thinking them pebbles, and where huts were plastered with cement studded with precious stones, was a compelling magnet which few, seemingly, could resist, and a remarkable tide of humanity began to set in toward the pits.

Discoveries at Dutoitspan, Bultfontein, De Beers and Kimberley grew in number and importance, and as inflated reports began to reach the outside world men of all nations, callings and character responded. As in the incipient stages

covering of soil so thin it needed only an ordinary fall of rain to be washed away, and others, worth thousands, lay exposed on the ground, the searchers only having to stoop to pick them up.

Values of land began to mount dizzily, and the real rush of adventurers began. The first arrivals merely skimmed the surface, thinking that nothing of value would be found deeper down, and it was only after the upper layers had been combed several times, and the prospect of gaining riches by easy means

ing with what they thought were "shiny stones," but which, upon expert scrutiny, were discovered to be diamonds of first quality.

The next discovery of importance was made on the farm of Jacoba Magdalena Cecilia Visser. This farm, called Jagersfontein, had for overseer a man named De Klerk, who, in walking along a little stream running through the place, noticed several small garnets mixed with pebbles of agate in the bed of the creek. Recalling the stories he had heard of diamonds being picked up, he began prospecting, and one day in August, 1870, while awkwardly sifting the dry gravel in a common wire sieve, he found a diamond weighing 50 carats.

The Rush Begins

The news spread quickly, and Mrs. Visser's neighbors flocked to the farm. The thrifty widow permitted them to dig on her premises, but charged each \$10 a month for doing so.

For several months prospecting went on in casual fashion, the phlegmatic Boers sitting by while their native helpers sifted the gravel and dug shallow pits, but as the news of additional finds spread, more prospectors arrived, many in canvas-covered wagons such as were seen during the rush of the gold miners about Bultfontein was dotted with tents erected by the prospectors for themselves and their families, the early scenes suggesting country folk at a picnic. Although diamonds con-

Hoboes Demand More Lenient Laws

IF PSYCHOANALYSIS is accomplished by timing and recording the patient's verbal reactions to a list of selected words, why shouldn't it be possible to conduct these tests en masse, making the analysis of gatherings from the resolutions they adopt? There are difficulties that would militate against accuracy, but—

At the recent convention of "tramps" in Baltimore, according to an account of the proceedings in "The Hobo News," the assembled "blanket stiffs," "floaters," "cats" and "wobblies," by which terms hoboes are known in different parts of the country, adopted resolutions calling for the abolishment of capital punishment, chain gangs and kangaroo courts.

Demand Free Rides

Still another resolution read: "Resolved, That we call for free transportation for all migratory workers to and from the job."

The resolution didn't say who the 'boes should call on, but in another resolution they resolved that "this convention goes on record as demanding special legislation for the

exercise of our citizenship at all places where elections are held."

What could be sweeter? The right to vote anywhere, any time, and free transportation to and from the ballot box. Doubtless it was an oversight, and at the next convention the transportation demand will be amended to include drawing rooms for workers bound across the continent on such momentous undertakings.

"Scratch house" conditions in the flop houses in Baltimore were condemned in an unanimous convention protest. With a sublime indifference to the scarcity of news print "Hobo News" refers to them as "cheap flop houses." The rest of the resolution was as follows:

"We (the delegates) call on the Health Bureau of the city to get on the job and compel these doss houses to operate up to the standard that is necessary for the health of those who are forced to live in them. They are filthy, unventilated, unsanitary and, recognizing the fact that medical authorities have stated that cooties, bedbugs, etc. [the editor of "Hobo News" condensed a paragraph in "etc." that time], are the

bearers of bubonic plague and other contagious diseases, and as the city is in daily risk of incurring an outbreak of disease from this source, and as the health of the city and the comfort of those whose earning power compels them to flop in these joints are concerned, we appeal to the public of this city to impress on those authorities who supervise these places the necessity of doing their evident duty."

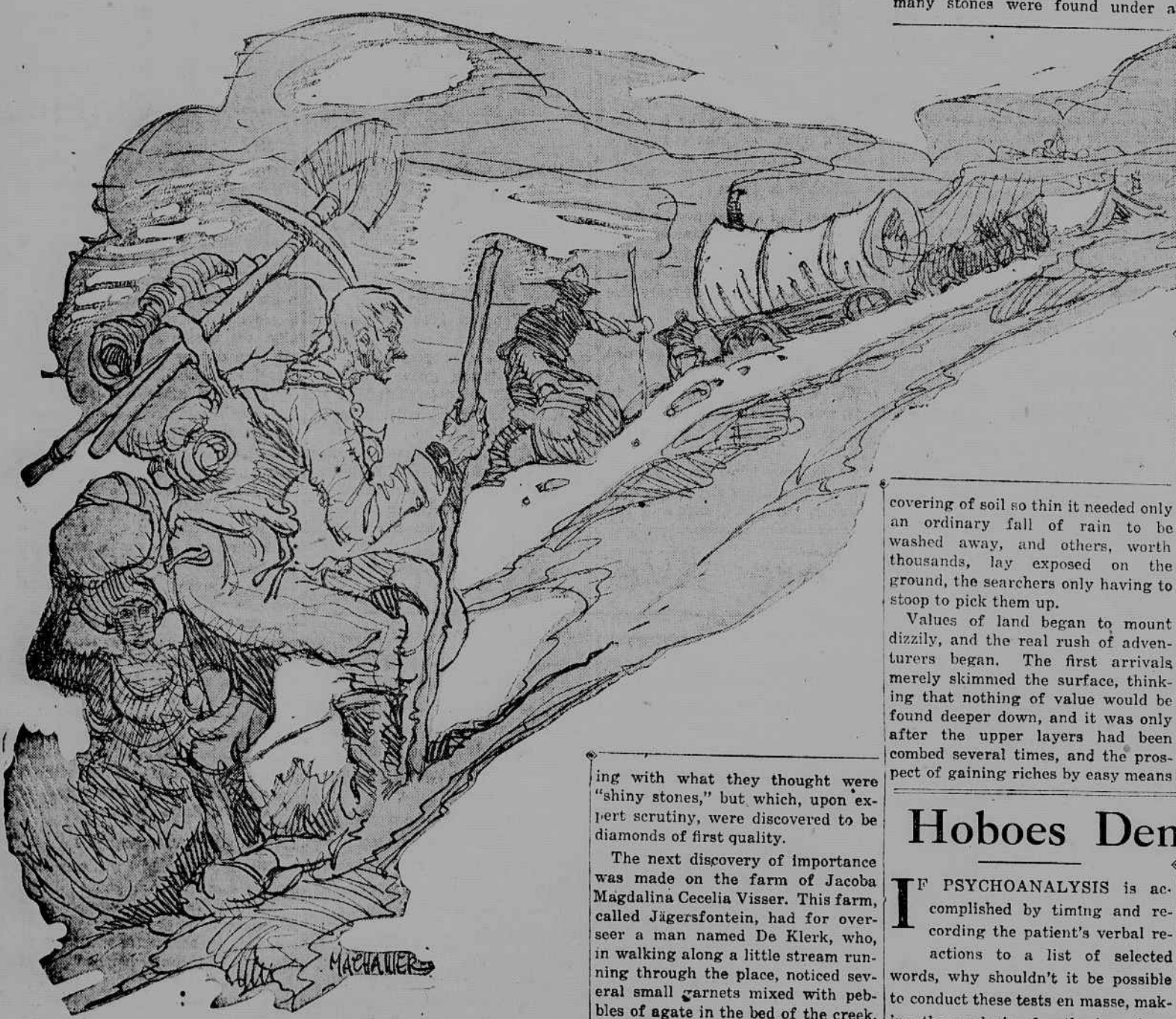
Uphold Martens

There was another resolution with a broad international viewpoint demanding the freedom of Ireland, and one supporting Ludwig C. A. K. Martens in his efforts to prevent himself and coworkers "from being shanghaied from the United States" and demanding that he be accorded all the privileges which should be his as ambassador from the Soviet government of Russia.

Resolutions dealing with economic subjects called for a shorter work day, and in this one the infamous "sab cat" of the I. W. W. showed its claws, or as some might say, clause, for this is it:

"Cooperate with every organization functioning 'on the job' at all times when they demand the shorter work day."

That means sabotage, in the language of the "wobbly," are the



ditions women in large numbers are taking part in it. Glistening blacks carrying gear to be used by their masters in the digging, soldiers of fortune from odd corners of the globe, phlegmatic Boers from South African colonies, alert, keen visaged representatives of the diamond interests, and a host of restless spirits in whom the World War has not destroyed the desire for dangerous undertakings are taking up favorable positions for the rush.

"Claring or Bust"—or a slogan to that effect—is the cry heard above the babel of excited tongues.

It is a long way from Kimberley to the cabarets and the white lights of New York, but keen interest, nevertheless, has been aroused by the accounts of these activities. Among the big diamond dealers along Fifth Avenue and the cutters in the Maiden Lane district there is, as has already been suggested, a disposition to receive the reports with conservatism. This is not the

rible heat and soul-devastating drought.

But its position between two of the big diamond colonies has been advanced to support the contention that it is the connecting link of the "mother lode" leading to Kimberley, the rich Premier mine, and Dutoitspan. And certainly the stories of finds already made are no more romantic or miraculous than those which preceded the first Kimberley rush.

It was in 1869 that the first diamonds were found in South Africa. One of the stories of the way it came about traced it back to the visit of an overseer to Bultfontein, a farm owned by a poor Boer, Cornelis Hendrik du Plooy, in the Free State. The overseer had gone to du Plooy's farm to discuss a matter of business and while talking with him was attracted by the bright flash of an object in the mortar with which the base of the house was plastered on